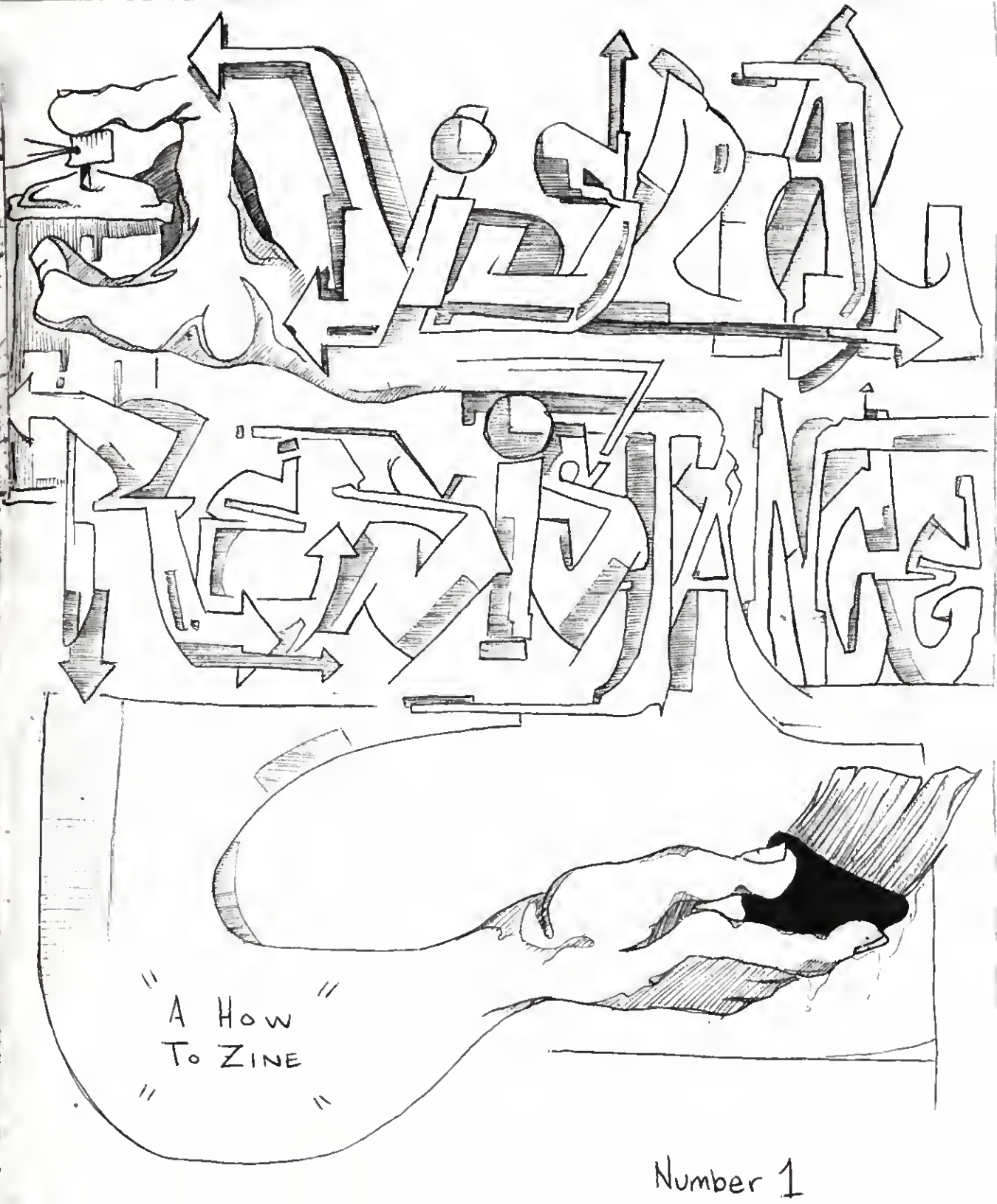


TEACH



" A How  
To ZINE  
"

Number 1

JORDAN

This zine was compiled by members of Visual Resistance, and is by no means a complete or official "how-to"...

Visual Resistance is a collective of artists working to promote critical thinking through graffiti and street art by hosting a website and working in the street.

Most of this information is based from experience and second hand knowledge, so if you have suggestions for the zine, and the website, send us your ideas, images, and criticisms.

If you are looking for reasons on why you should put up street art it's not in here, it's outside on the street!

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## Resources

### Web

[www.visualresistance.org](http://www.visualresistance.org)  
[www.justseeds.org](http://www.justseeds.org)  
[www.stencilrevolution.com](http://www.stencilrevolution.com)  
[www.stencilarchive.org](http://www.stencilarchive.org)  
[www.ekosystem.org](http://www.ekosystem.org)  
[www.risewithus.com](http://www.risewithus.com)  
[www.woostercollective.com](http://www.woostercollective.com)  
[www.graffiti.org](http://www.graffiti.org)  
[www.banksy.co.uk](http://www.banksy.co.uk)  
[www.robbyconal.com](http://www.robbyconal.com)

### Books

**Stencil Pirates** by Josh Macphee

**Bomb the Suburbs**

and **No More Prisons** by William Upski Wimsatt

**You Don't Have to Fuck People Over to Survive** and

**War in the Neighborhood** by Seth Tobocman

**Peace Signs**

**Subway Art**

### Movies

**Wild Style**

**Style Wars**

This is not intended to be a complete list, but someplace for folks to start.

email - [visual.resistance@gmail.com](mailto:visual.resistance@gmail.com)

• check our site for updates - [www.visualresistance.org](http://www.visualresistance.org)





**Markers-** most art supply stores have a wide selection of wide tipped markers that are great for writing. Pilot markers are great because you can use them to make your own homemade fat tips. **Materials:** Pilot Marker, Ink, chalkboard Eraser, duct or electric tape, and 35mm film Canister.

- Take the tip off the Pilot marker, get rid of the plastic and the tip
- Tear a piece of the eraser off, cut it in 1/2
- Wrap the metal case with tape, near the end of the marker tip. Something for the film canister to fit over
- Fill up the marker casing with ink, homemade or store bought, leather dye or marsh ink will do
- Fold the cut eraser in half and plug up the marker with it.
- Put your cap over the your tip and toss it in a ziplock bag.
- Your now ready to let your tip fill up with ink and go nuts. This is really messy so make sure keep it upside down as best as possible so you don't have ink getting everywhere.

## Mapping it Out

You don't have to make an incredibly detailed plan before you put your art on the street, but there are a few things you might want to consider:

- What are the quickest getaway routes?
- Where are there large concentrations of people during the day (to see your artwork) and at night (in the form of cars, cops, drunks, homeless folks)? Will they get you in trouble or provide cover?
- Who are the people in the area and how do they defend their property against creative expression?
- What streets lead where and how do they connect to each other?
- Are there people who might give you refuge in their homes if you have to flee from the law?
- How are different sections of the city used- are there lots of shoppers, businessmen, students, etc.?
- What sections of town are important to the ruling elites and why? For example, is there a neighborhood slated for destruction to build a freeway or an area being gentrified for yuppie bars and restaurants?





## Strategy

When it comes to strategy, there is an etiquette that some folks choose to follow. Remember putting art up on the street makes a statement, and chances are people will be more receptive to it depending on where you place it.

- Play with existing messages or surroundings.
- Make people laugh and the space interactive.
- Create dialogue on the walls with manipulative advertising.
- Scout out spots that are highly visible and well traveled.
- Whether you're indoors, outdoors, or underground, remember it's probably not a great idea to leave a trail of evidence behind you, so wander around a bit and stagger your artwork. Don't feel confined to one area.

## Other mediums



**Chalk-** an arguably "legal" medium, cos it will wash away after a rain or two, after you've beautified things and made your statement. Artists like Keith Haring, Jean Michel Basquiat, and De La Vega have used chalk really successfully on empty ad spaces, the sidewalk and most any surface

**Mops-** Containers that liquid shoe polish comes in can be used to write things and are refillable. Try making homemade style inks and filling them up, or get your hands on KRink, a homemade silver ink.

**Etching and scratching-** Etching fluid is totally toxic and not something to use if you're not familiar with it. It can be applied thru the sponge tipped leather dye containers or applied thru stencils. While scratching can be done with anything hard and sharp; drill bits, grinder bits. Remember tho that light is a very valuable and precious resource in places like NYC. So try not to ruin peoples access to it.



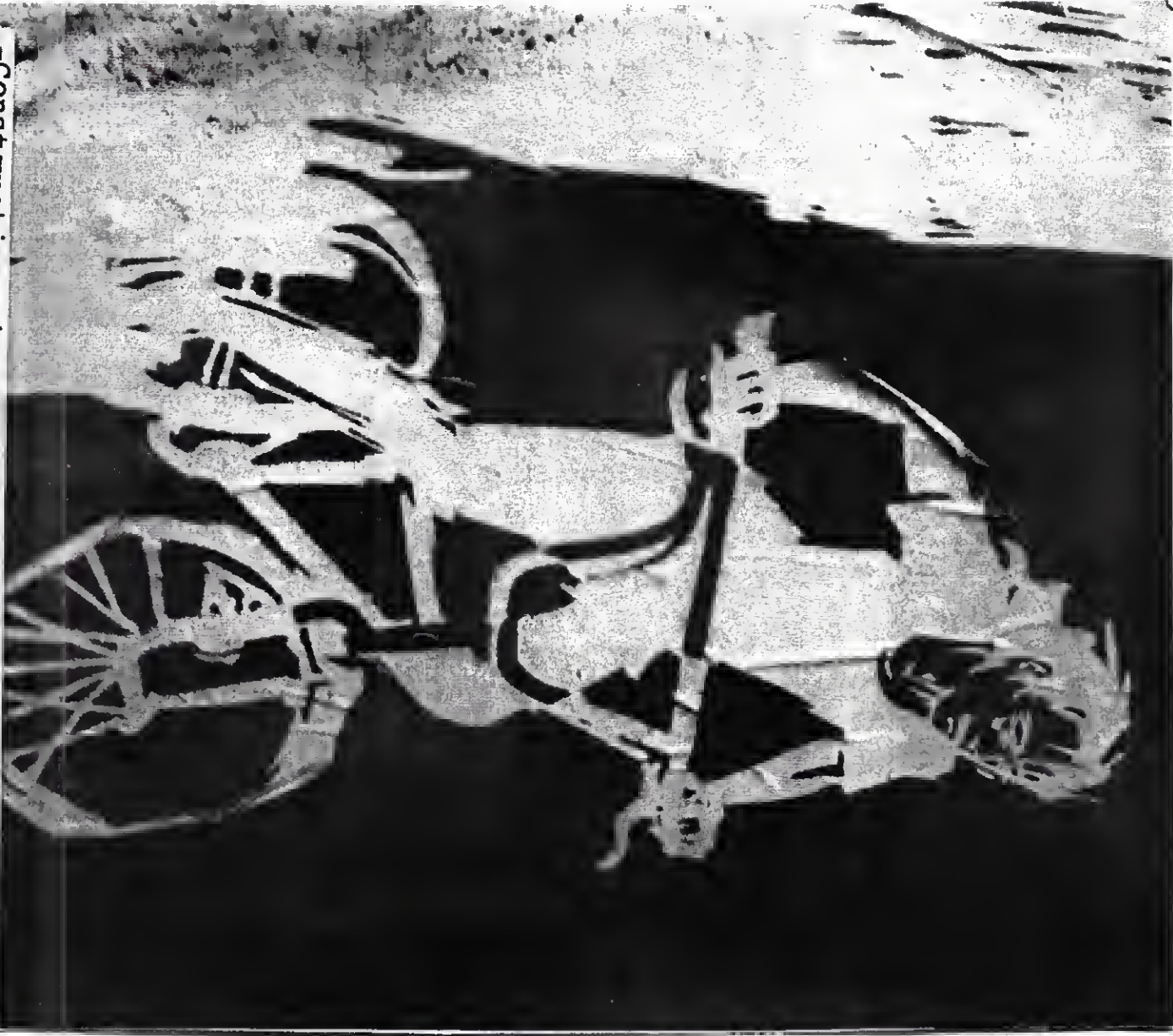


### Placement and Surroundings

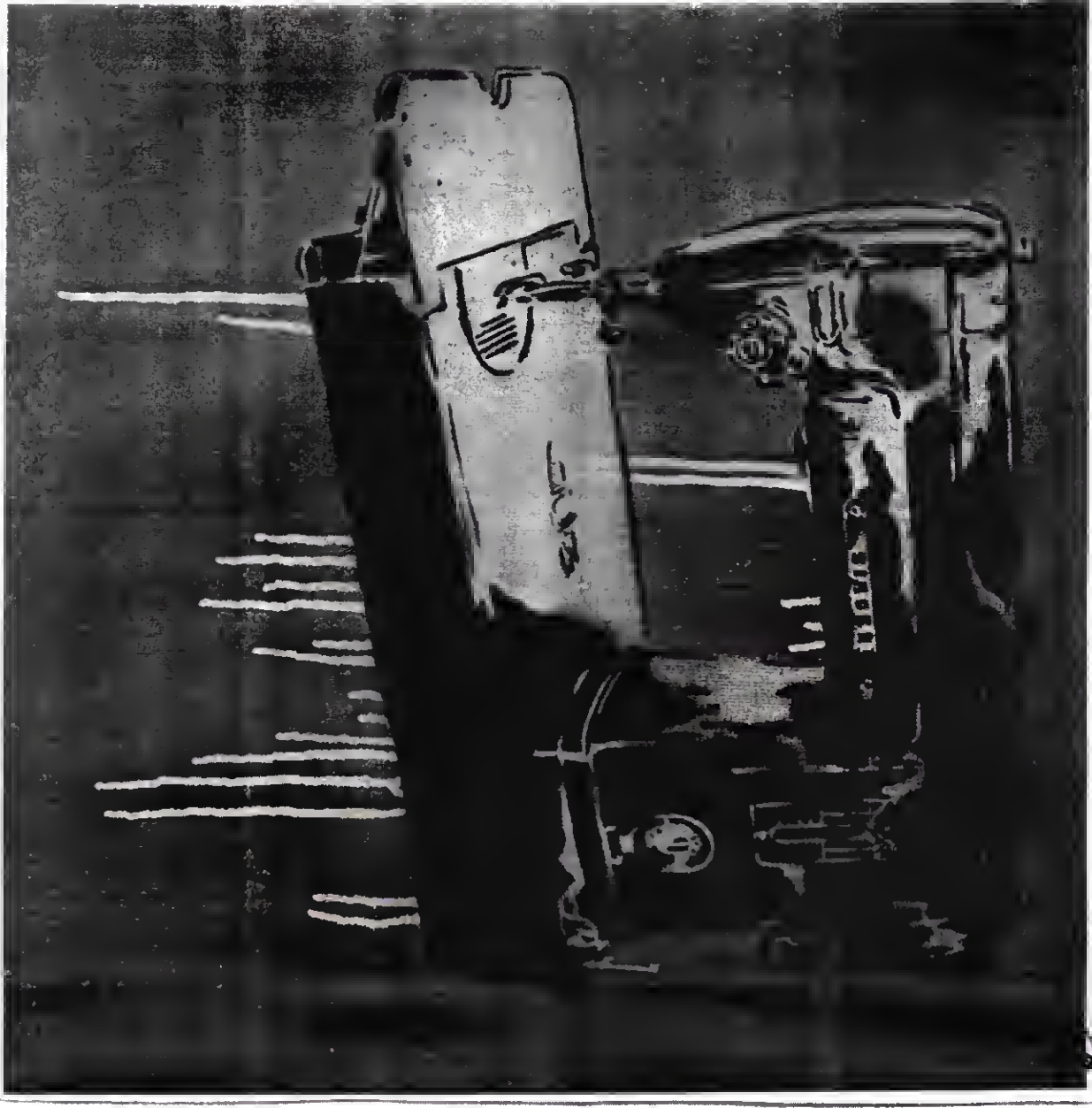
-BE SAFE AND HAVE FUN! I know quite a few folks who get a rush from climbing bridges, billboards, and highway overpasses, but don't feel like you have to risk your life to get stuff up. Since putting art on the street is illegal to begin with, you are already taking a big risk. -Small mom and pop shops, homes, and playgrounds may not be the best places to hit.





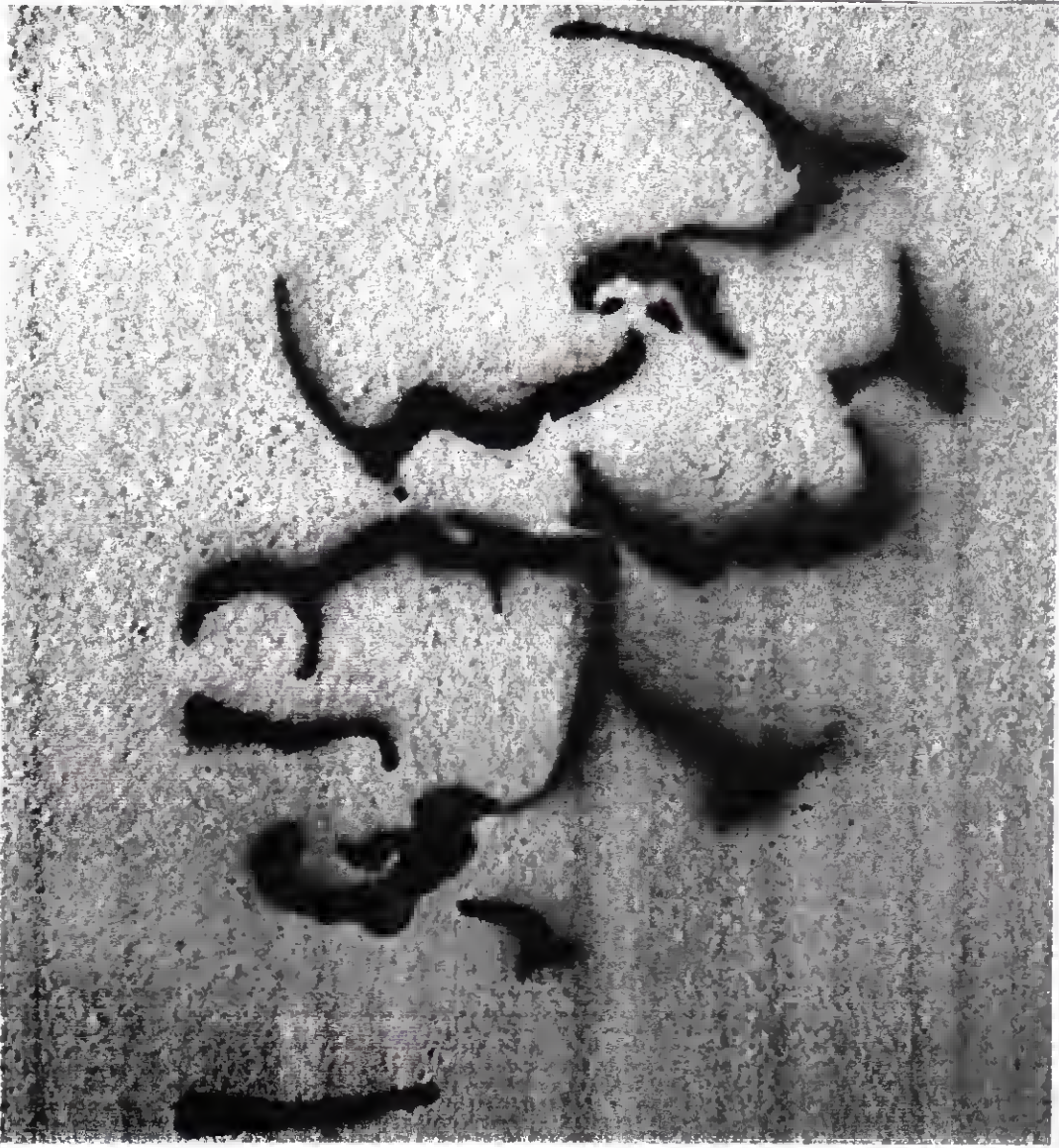


-Construction sites, bridges, office or corporate buildings, subways, billboards, and other high traffic areas where there is already graffiti is fair game.



Costuming yourself can also be smart and funny. While wearing all black may seem appropriate you're probably likely to end up drawing more attention to yourself. I feel really good dressing up fancy like I'm going out to a hip club, because that's who I see most out on the streets at 4 am, I blend in more. It also gives the appearance of having a more "acceptable" agenda for being out.





If the police see you, not in the act, but looking suspicious, they may track you, and going home may not be a bad idea. Having a story pre planned and consistent with your friends is smart. Sucking up to cops feels really gross, but if avoiding arrest is possible it can work for you. You can be the disillusioned art student who is confused, apologetic and slightly to moderately upset. Don't rat on anyone, don't admit to anything, they may take your paint and art if they caught you in the act. Ask if you're under arrest. Ask if you're being detained. Don't let them search you.

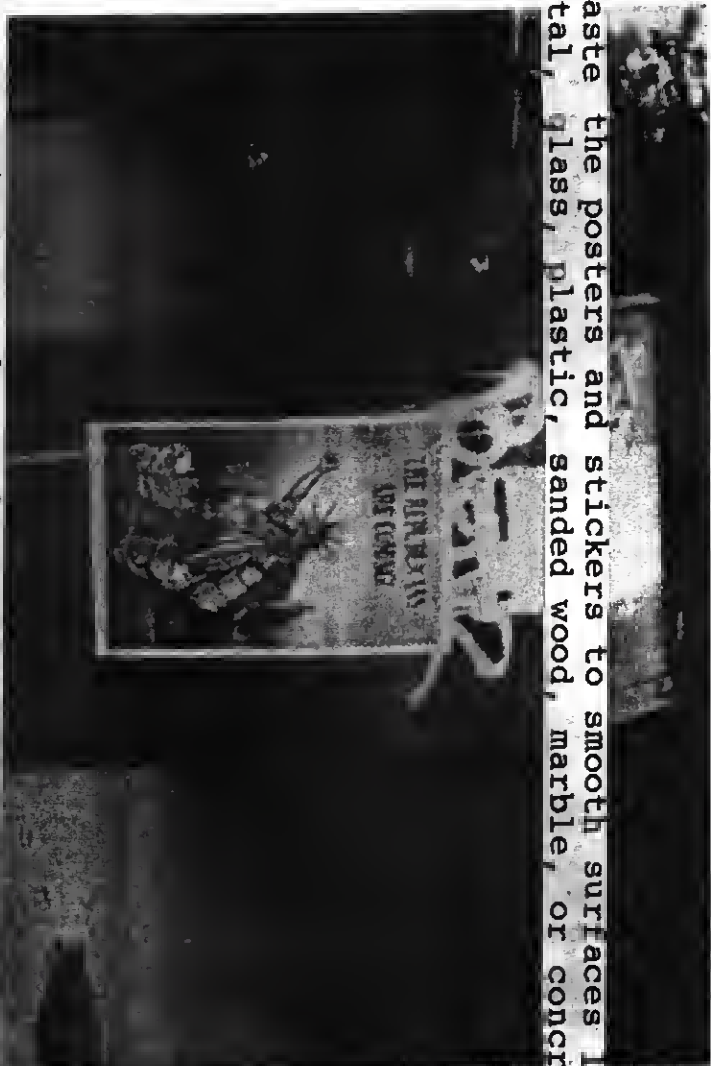


-There are plenty of poles, lamp post boxes, dumpsters, planters, traffic signs, windows, mailboxes, bus shelters, electric boxes, and advertisements to plaster over.



⑦

-Paste the posters and stickers to smooth surfaces like metal, glass, plastic, sanded wood, marble, or concrete.



-The more texture the surface has, the easier it will be to rip or scrape off.



-Just be aware that getting caught pasting on federal property (mailboxes), city property (traffic signs), and private property all have consequences.



⑧

Spray paint is toxic. It's serious, and people's health has been destroyed. Wear a respirator, not a white flimsy dust mask. Chance the filters when they darken. Avoid getting it on your skin. I wear rubber or latex gloves under winter gloves not only so i don't look suspicious, and because the paint can enter the blood stream through the skin. Although the smell of spray paint may seem romantic and bad ass, it destroys your nervous system, which can mean kidney damage and loss of bladder control among other things.



One of my first, and most passionate stenciling experiences was a response to street harassment I was experiencing on a constant basis at one specific area in my old town. It was really upsetting for me to live in a town for so long and feel so little entitlement, respect, or safety (emotionally and physically) on the streets I walked everyday.



There was one area in particular I got catcalled, followed and harassed on a constant basis one summer, and one night it quickly built up inside me to the point of heartache, anger and sadness. I felt so unsafe on these streets that should by now feel like home. I made a 3 foot tall stencil of an old fashioned picture frame with a portrait of my mom inside it. I put it up on a highly visible wall where street harassment was a frequent for me. I was taking back my streets in a tangible way which felt phenomenal. While I was not physically safer, emotionally I was eased by this comforting and personal image. I had changed the landscape for myself, and the image being both of a woman and created by a woman I hoped for others it would act as a female presence in male territory.

### Don't Get Caught!

Sometimes familiar surroundings are nice to begin with and each and every outing you can look with pride upon your additions to the local décor. Wherever you decide to begin, you definitely should look around for surveillance. There are surveillance cameras everywhere. Some are more hidden than others. They are more easily recognizable in subway stations, elevators, in chain stores, and everywhere in wealthy neighborhoods.

When should you head out? Some think that late, late nights are ideal. Some prefer the early mornings. Others prefer going out on Sunday at 10 am, your traditional day of rest. I've gone out at all hours and have found that one is no better than the other, there are always cops and people around. Basically the best time is when you are feeling most awake and alert in a setting where you are familiar and comfortable.

If you spend time on any block in the city or in a specific area you will also notice the degree of police presence. Stand on a corner for an hour. Count how many times a squad car rolls by. Some cops aren't in uniform and patrol in plainclothes in regular looking cars, or by turnstiles in the subway. So stay aware of who's around you, and who's watching. If you get nervous, ditch your supplies in a trash can or hide them and return for them later.

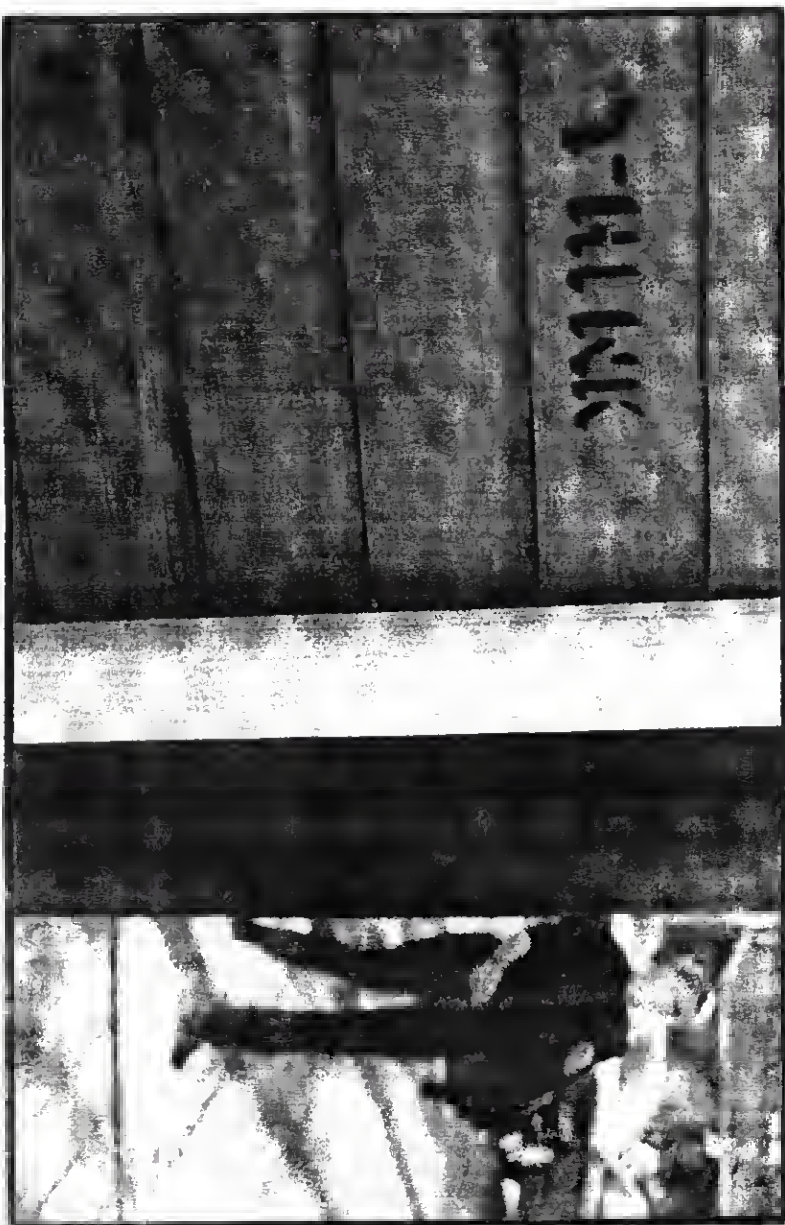




Know your rights and know the consequences of your acts. According to the law they are considered acts of vandalism and defacement of property. Depending on what city you live in you could end up serving jail time or pay extremely high fines. It may seem like common sense, but signing your name or even an alias, or tag name could incriminate you further. So don't let a desire for fame and recognition cloud your judgment. If any identification info is on your poster, sticker, stencil, etc. for example a name, phone number, or address, this could be used against you. If you get caught, you might want to try to repeat this mantra: "art project" and hope it works. If not make sure you ask: "Are you detaining me? Am I under arrest? I want to assert my right to remain silent! I want to speak to a lawyer!"

## placement

Where you place your art is defiantly something to take into consideration in regards to personal safety while out as well as your desired audience. With highly trafficked areas a lot of people will see your art, but it may be buffed a lot faster. The experience of seeing a stencil in a public place is an experience varied greatly by placement.



While comparatively not a lot of people will see your art if you put it on the inside of a dumpster lid, or in a hidden nook of an alley, but think how amazing it is for the finder of such art. Keep in mind who you are having this visual dialogue with in regards to neighborhood, traffic, and specific placement.





### Posters

Whether you're creating artwork, political manifestos or fliers for an event, posters are a wonderful medium to communicate with. Posters can be mass produced and distributed widely, depending on how persistent you are. Reproducing an image for a poster can be done in a variety of ways. The cost of producing your posters depends on the materials you use and the type of printing. It can range from inexpensive xerox copies to more expensive silkscreen printing. The best paper to use is newspaper, butcher paper, or xerox paper. Regardless of what method you choose, wheat paste is a good medium to glue posters up with on the street. Unlike wallpaper paste, wheat flour is cheap and easy to get a hold of. Chances are your posters will stay up for a longer time than if you put them up with duct tape.





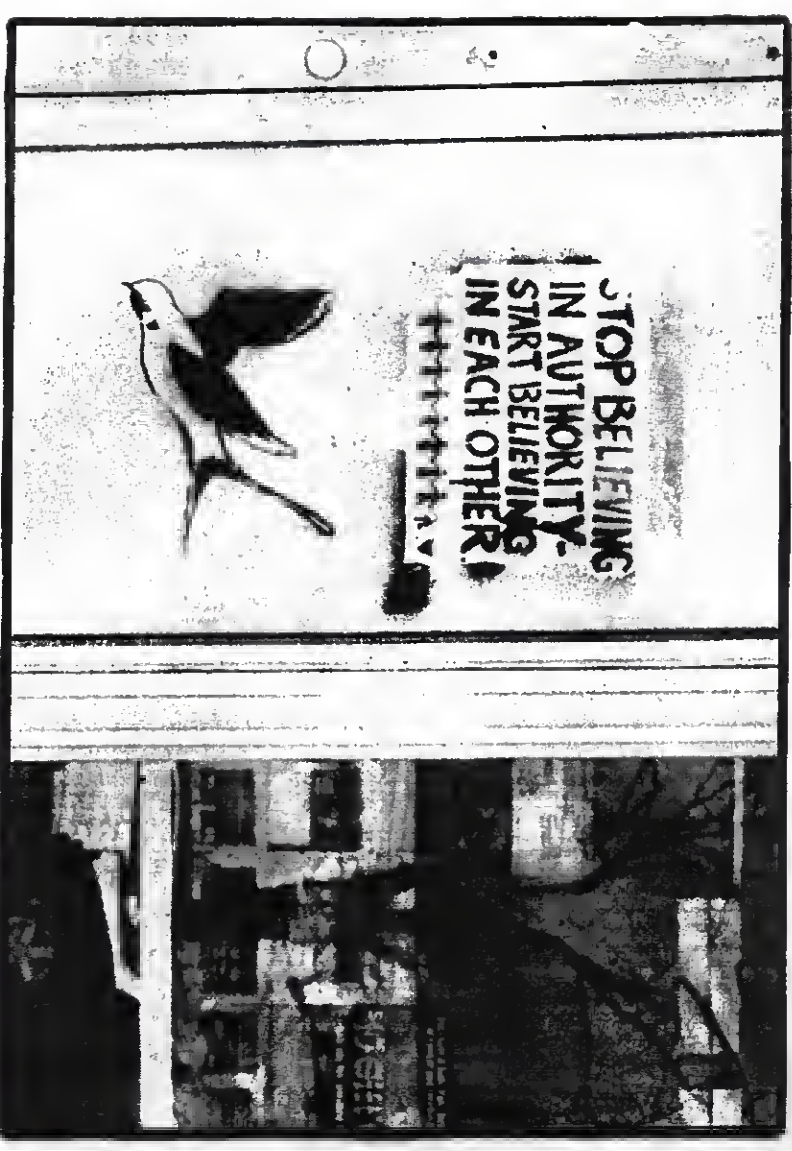
1) If you're going to be doing a lot of pasting, a bucket with a lid, a handle, and a wide paint brush work well. Otherwise a squirt bottle will hold enough, it is also easier to conceal. To put something up, paint an area of the wall the size of your poster with a layer of paste using a wide paintbrush. You want the wheat paste to be thin enough to paint onto walls but thick enough to stick. Smooth your poster over it. Make sure you glue the edges down, and smooth out the bumps and bubbles. If you don't- the poster will be ripped down lickety split! I also put a coat of paste over the poster once it is on the wall to solidify it.



Having two people (one to handle paste, another to handle the posters) helps avoid getting paste on the posters which can cause them to stick hopelessly together. It's also a good idea to go with a friend, so one person can paste and the other can be a look out.

Riding your bike to go out on a run is a bit cumbersome but also makes me feel like I have the appearance of an alternate activity. It's also safer because your work gets more spread out, so you don't leave a trail. It also provides a quicker getaway which can come in handy in dealing with either the police or street harassers.

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Being a woman I often felt envious of my male friends that could go out on a run at anytime of night, alone or with a buddy. Putting art up on the street for me is often spontaneous and therapeutic, and to have to pre plan a crew to go with me seemed to put a damper on it. While going out alone is unsafe for many reasons, if you're a woman I recommend bringing a bike, organizing crews, and generally being aware of your own safety.



(39)



Paint can be stashed anywhere on the body as well, I use a fanny pack, but if you wear baggy clothes I'm sure something better can be figured out. Paint can also be rolled on with a squeegee or put into a non aerosol spray bottle, neither of which I've had much success with but please try on your own.



(12)

### Wheat Paste Recipe

You can either make your own paste or buy (steal) wallpaper paste at the hardware store.

-Begin by pouring one cup of flour into 1 1-2 cups of water.

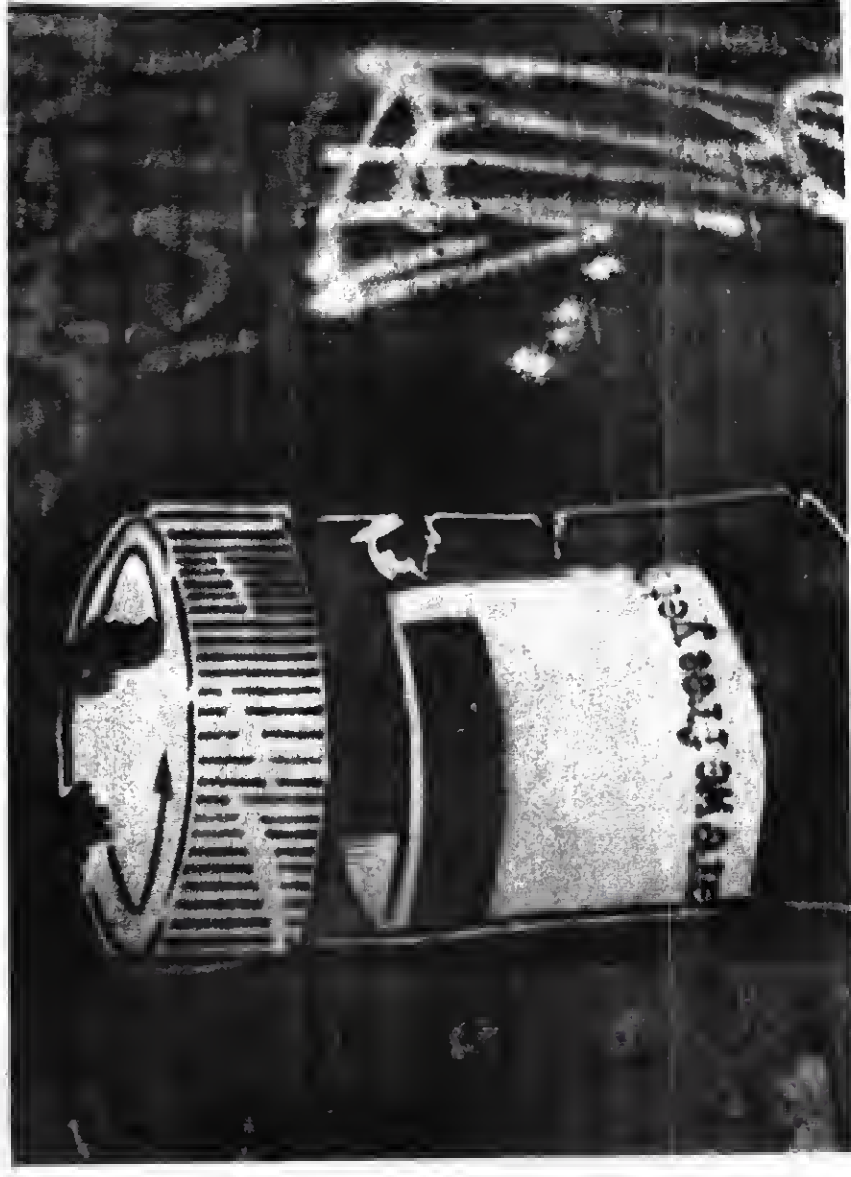
-Heat to a boil until it thickens, stir to remove all lumps (with a whisk if possible) and add more water until it turns into a thick, clear goop.

-Cook on low heat for at least half an hour, being careful not to burn it. After approx. 20-30 mins., paste will become thinner and more transparent.

-It expands a lot, experiment.

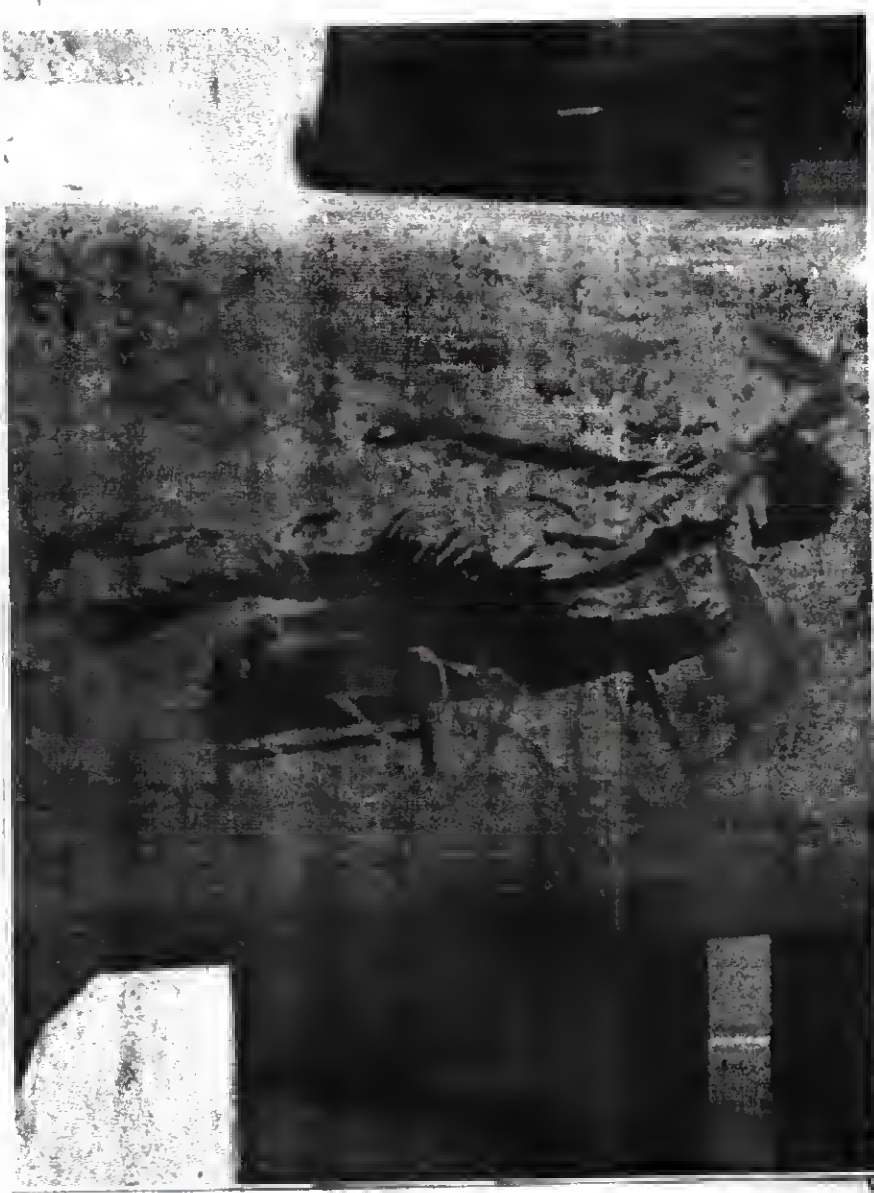
-Upon reaching desired smooth, pliable, and somewhat transparent consistency, put paste into airtight jar or bottle or other such container.

-Let cool.





(13)



(14)

Depending on the size, material, and potential placement for your stencil there are a number of ways to carry it. Hiding a stencil wet with paint can be a bit tricky, and many a stencil of mine has been wrecked from drying to the inside of wherever it's been hiding. From personal experience my favorite method is wearing at least two layers of clothing, the outer layer a zip up, and putting the stencil flush against my belly or chest, between the layers. The cloths get messy around the stencil but not visibly on the outside. I feel a lot less conspicuous without a bag and the stencil comes out and goes back fairly quickly.



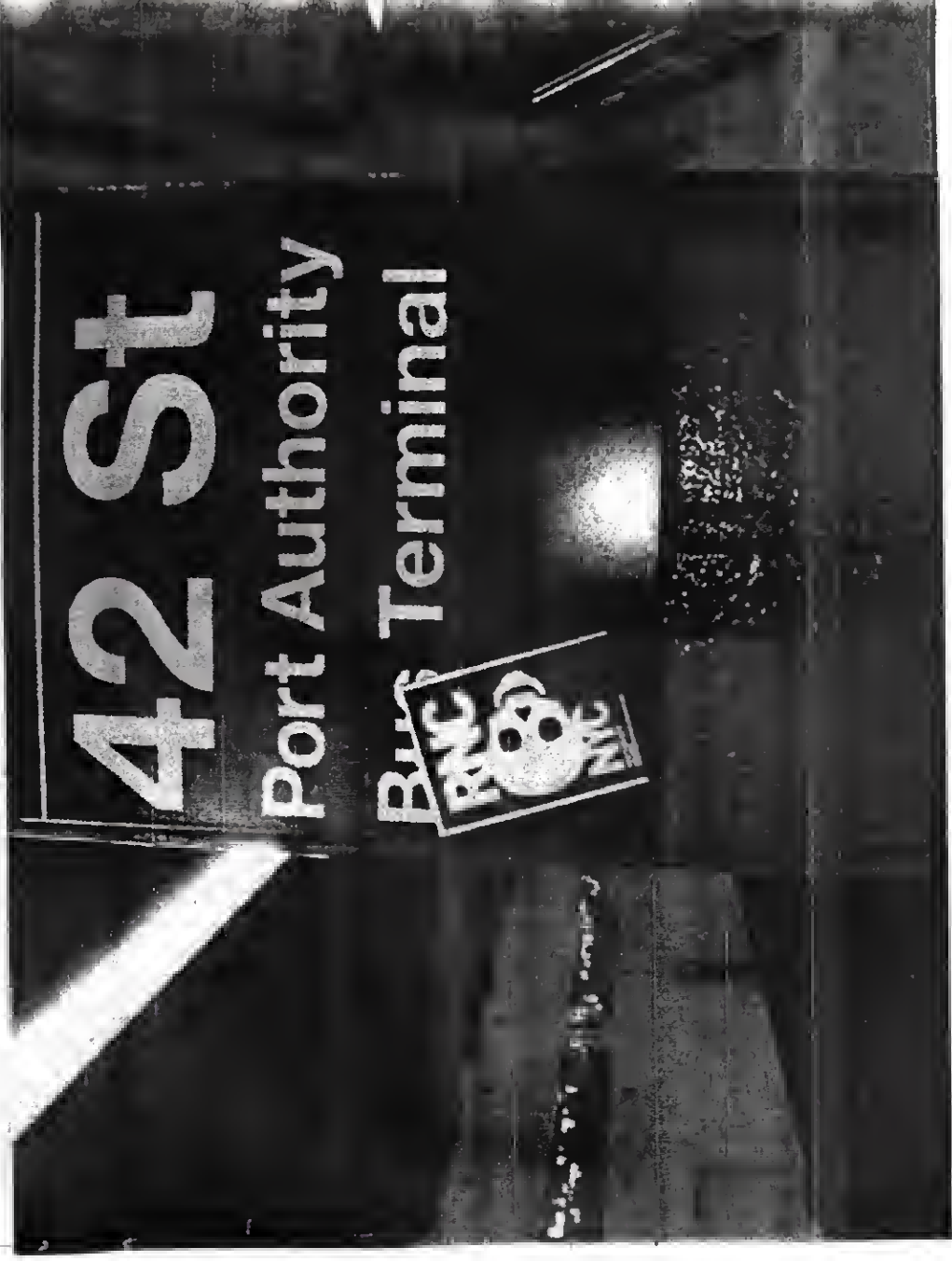
19) If your stencil is huge an artists portfolio may seem a bit obvious but I've done it, and my appearance lends well to the art student profile so I've been comfortable, but that doesn't work for all. Cutting stencils out of gessoed canvas also works really well for street pieces because it can be folded or rolled up and ironed out flat again when you get home. You can also try slipping it into a folded newspaper or book (lined with chicken wire or wax paper to prevent sticking if you feel like getting fancy), an old bag that you don't mind getting painty, I like using flat canvas grocery/book bags, or you can make a flat file with corrugated cardboard.



You can conceal your materials in ways which are fun and comical. You can replace the bottom of a pizza box or paper grocery bag with your stencil and camouflage your spray paint in a quart milk box, or whatever else you can figure out. The pizza box trick is fairly common, and possibly recognizable by now so get creative with it.

## Stickers

14) Pick a design for your sticker. You can draw one by hand or create your design using a computer printer. Sticker paper comes in all sizes, so make some that you can carry in your pocket or bag. Find sticker paper with a backing you can easily and quickly peel off. If you don't feel like spending a lot of money on paper, go to the local post office and take the free priority mail labels or if you can't hack DIY stickers, just use somebody else's pre-made, pro-quality vinyl stickers.







If you want to move outside and above ground, remember that if you use an ink jet printer on paper stickers, like USPS stock, the ink might run if you put them someplace that's totally exposed. Most will hold up fine for months, but if you really fear smears, you can spray acrylic on the stickers before you go out. This might cause the sticker to run too, but it usually makes for a cool effect and extended sticker life. So spray 'em, let 'em dry and then head out to post 'em. You can always use wheat paste or high strength polyurethane glue (or a even product like liquid nails for vinyl stickers) to make stickers extra sticky, impervious to the elements and nearly impossible to remove.



It's good to be on the same page with your friends about what you want out of the outing. What you do and don't feel comfortable with, how able bodied you are, and just what feels safe. Climbing buildings, billboards, or fences may not be your thing, and last minute decisions can add stress. Weather or not you feel comfortable running from the police is something that varies with circumstance, but really important to think about and discuss beforehand. If you made them run you'll most likely be arrested (or beat up), but if they caught you in the act you probably would have anyway. It does increase the chance they'll show up in court the make sure you're dealt with, but nothings certain.

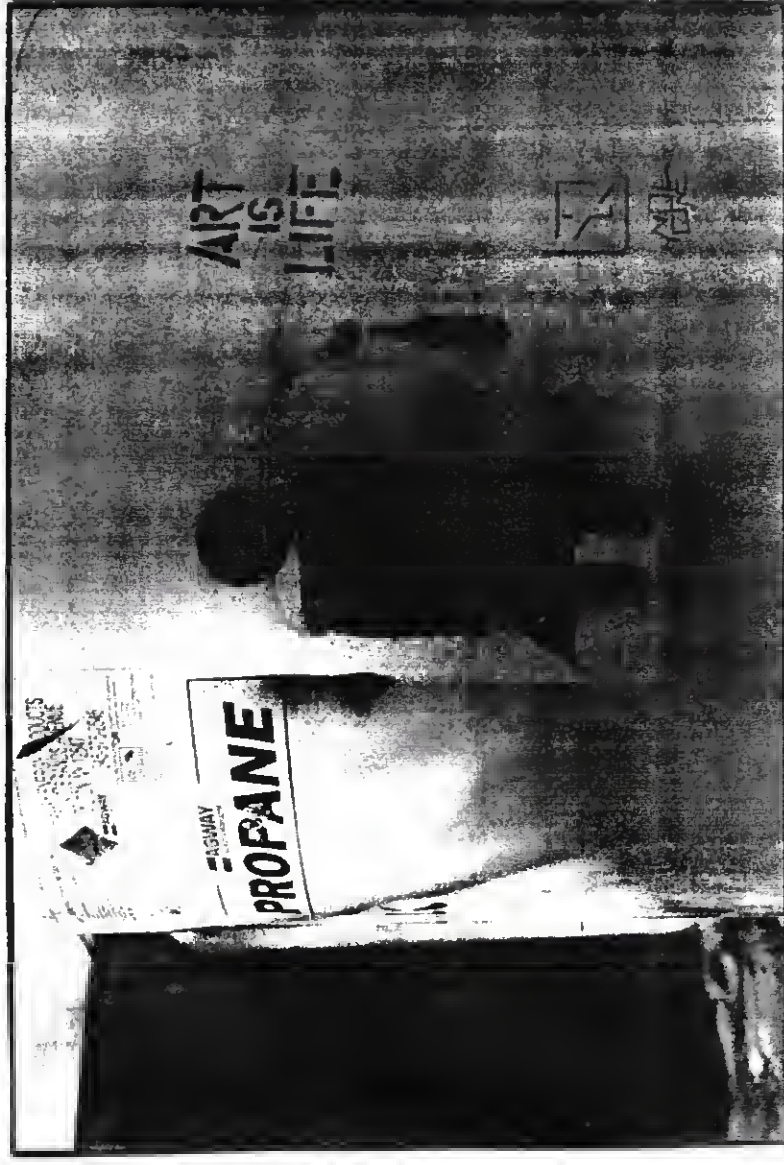


## Planning

Before you go out it's good to do a little pre planning, on your own and especially with your friends. Map out a route if you want, it may help if you get jitters last minute, which I often do. Knowing before hand where you want to hit can ease this a bit, and lead to fabulous placing. If it's a really large piece I feel great if it gets up just once or twice, especially if it's in a highly visible area, I like to just get it up and go home. This more relevant in a smaller town where a large piece quickly got the cops attention and they'll be on the lookout.



# Stencils



**Materials-** you'll need something to cut your stencil out of once you decide on your idea. There's so many kinds of materials out there you can use and it really just depends on how you want to use it. Stencils you will only use once, or very few times, can be cut out of something as accessible as paper, but anything will do. For more durable materials try:



14

# steps

-First you need an idea of what you wanna paint. You could either draw something out directly onto your material and then start cutting. If you don't draw you can use already existing images; photos, drawings, etc, and print them out on paper to the size you desire. Attach them to your material with a glue stick or spray adhesive, and start cutting. To create a "stencil-like" image from photos, photocopy it, over and over, with the contrast set very high. This will eliminate most details and simplify the image to just black and white. For specifics on the techie stuff check out "tutorials" section of [stencilrevolution.com](http://stencilrevolution.com).



-Next is the most tedious but fun part, cutting out your stencil. Using your blade you are going to cut out the areas that you want to be painted (paint goes thru the holes onto the preferred surface.) You should be cutting on top of a cutting board, linoleum, magazine, or other surface you don't mind destroying. If you have already drawn your image and have put in connectors you should be alright. If not, try to visualize what the stenciled image could look like after its been sprayed. Look for areas that can be connected creating a "floating positive space." My buddy jon explains them like this:



# LASER GUIDED DEMOCRACY



Now you should have a stencil in your hands, it's a good idea to spray your stencil on something to see if it came out as beautiful as you visualized. If so, you can apply your art to the desired surface with spray paint, or some acrylic paint with a sponge/brush.

Lay the stencil flat onto the surface and spray with short blasts of paint from your can or dabs from the sponge. You can use pieces of tape or spray adhesive to get a "cleaner" look. For smaller images its not usually necessary to press down for long steady streams, it wastes paint and is less controlled. Take you stencil off and admire your creation, and do it again!



"The more complex the image the more compromises you'll have to make regarding floating positive space. The best stencils are those that take this into account and use them as part of the style. With a little practice its pretty easy to figure out how to keep important parts of your composition from popping out and falling onto the floor!"

An example: Floating positive space



To Retain the inner diamond the stencil should look like this

# READ A BOOK

★ NOTICE THE BREAKS IN THE LINES OF MOST LETTERS





Stencil template !

△ - - - cut - cut - cut - - - △

